



Blotto, Twinks, and the Ex-King's Daughter

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Praise for Simon Brett: "Brett is a master at subtle characterization, superb setting, and plotting in which his characters solve themselves in the process of solving murders."--Booklist

When ex-Princess Etheline, daughter of the exiled king of Mitteleuropa, is kidnapped while visiting the seat of the Dukes of Tawcester, the duchess sends her son "Blotto" to rescue her. But Blotto isn't as bright as his sister "Twinks."

Simon Brett is the author of over thirty mystery novels and seven plays. He is married with three children and lives near Arundel in West Sussex, England.

Blotto, Twinks, and the Ex-King's Daughter Details


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From Reader Review Blotto, Twinks, and the Ex-King's Daughter for online ebook

Kate says

"It's that glorious period between the two world wars, and the exiled king of Mitteleuropa is celebrating with a visit to Tawcester Towers, the ancestral home of the Dukes of Tawcester. When the ex-king's daughter is kidnapped, *noblesse* obliges Blotto, the Duke's brave and handsome son to drive off to the rescue. Sadly, he is rather staggeringly stupid -- with a nickname like 'Blotto,' what could one expect? -- but his sister, Twinks, got all the family brains, and she is inclined to be helpful. And in more good news for the purloined princess, Blotto's devoted valet is coming along for the ride. Plus, they've got a really swell car."

~~back cover

This was the funniest thing I've read in ages! Well, why wouldn't I?

"Grimshaw [the butler] enlisted the help of Harvey, who was one of the housemaids at Tawcester Towers. (Tawcester, is should be emphasized at this point, despite being spelled 'Taw-ces-ter' is pronounced 'Taster'. Everybody knows that.) That Harvey was considerably above the age of most housemaids, and that she had remained in employment after certain ethical lapses which might have ended other careers, reflected the fact that she had an agreement with the butler. The precise nature of this 'agreement' was something that the family and staff at Tawcester Towers were far too polite to investigate.

...

"The important point was that, from long experience of needing to, Grimshaw knew that he could trust Harvey's discretion. And he knew that dead bodies could threaten considerable inconvenience to the smooth running of a country house weekend. Below stairs, Tawcester Towers had hardly yet recovered from the shock of discovering Lord Tawcester himself, seated in front of his study fire with a face the colour of the vintage port which proved to be his final indulgence. And his lordship's demise had happened a full five years before."

It only gets better from there!

Susan says

Although I really wanted to love this series, as much as I love Brett's Charles Paris books, I just couldn't warm to the characters or feel any interest in the plot of this spoof-cum-satire mystery featuring the quintessential "upper-class twit" Blotto and his brain-box whizz-bang sister sleuth, Twinks. Brett is a wonderful comic writer, so there were some very clever one-liners and some delightfully wry observations made in passing, but not enough to inspire me to revisit Blotto and Twinks in future. Sorry, Mr Brett; I'm a great fan - but just not of this series!

Melanie says

Sometimes you just need a silly book. From the reviews it looks like people either liked it or hated it. It may depend on your sense of humour but I thought this was done very well.

Susan says

A tongue-in-cheek mystery about Bright Young Things. Though penned by a contemporary writer, this book has many qualities present in those books from the Golden Age of mysteries, including the funny nicknames, lingo and slightly absurd situations.

Enjoyable read, though I don't think I'd want to make a steady diet of this type of writing. While most was fun to read, it sometimes got tired and on my nerves. But I also had quite a few chuckles along the way as well.

Jonathan Palfrey says

This book is basically imitation-Wodehouse (with a touch of Dornford Yates, I think), but even sillier and more exaggerated than the real thing. Perhaps it was intended as parody. The trouble with trying to parody a comedy is that you run the risk of being mistaken for a bad imitator.

Its saving grace is that, parody or not, it's quite amusing in its own right, and could make an amiable time-passer for a journey, unless you have a low tolerance of silliness.

However, the story is deliberately silly and the characters are deliberate caricatures; which seems rather a shame, because the author could surely do better if he wanted to. I have the odd feeling that inside those caricatures are real characters struggling to get out, but the author is determined not to permit any escape.

I'm not a devotee of heavy literature, but this is such light reading that it almost floats away.

There is one slightly sour note: the main caricatures seem superficially likeable and well-meaning, but they're made to say such outrageous things that I suspect the author despises them. Mr Brett, if you despise your own characters, then why waste your time writing about them? For heaven's sake, invent characters for whom you can feel real affection, and write about them instead.

I didn't buy this book, incidentally: my mother sent it to me after reading it herself, with the idea that I might find it amusing.

Cece says

eh. This was a disappointment. I don't really mind the derring-do overdone-ness, or the heavy hand with the period slang, or the xenophobic noblesse oblige-but not all together layered with a trowel on every page. The main requirement for a "send-up" of a style is subtlety. I was hoping for something along the lines of the early Amelia Peabody books by Elizabeth Peters-and did not find it. It is just over 200 pages, so I finished it-50 more pages and it would be on the life is too short shelf.

Jean says

Cross Downton Abbey and the Pink Panther and you get Blotto and Twinks. Lots of fun and I actually laughed out loud.

Grey853 says

Though I love Jeeves and Wooster, I realized pretty quickly that this whodunit in the P.G. Wodehouse style was not for me. It felt too forced and the actual plot outlandish, but not in an amusing way. Just not my cuppa.

Geevee says

The first - although for me second read - of the Blotto, Twinks and the... series.

This book is set around a murder of a foreign officer at Tawcester Towers who is with the entourage of the ex-king of Mittleeuropa.

This dastardly act sees Blotto give chase in the Lagonda and journey across Europe to find adventures in Mitteleuropa, as he tries to save family honour by rescuing an ex-princess who has been kidnapped by a usurping King.

And just where is his sister Twinks in all this?

Perfectly enjoyable high jinks by the aristocratic brother and sister whodunnit team with lovable characters, flowery and eccentric dialogue and class and other generalisations aplenty.

Tracy says

Fans of PG Woodhouse and Blackadder will recognize the inept aristocrat extraordinaire and British boob, Blotto, who has no room in what passes for his brain for anything other than cricket, hunting, and all things having to do with his ideal home Tawcester Towers. He asks the king and his entourage visiting from the fictitious Mittleeuropa how difficult it is to be foreign, since anyone not British and any other country to him is foreign. His sister, Twinks, is his foil--she is brilliant and humble and well-versed, plus her patience with her brother borders on heroic. A murder is committed at their estate, and they set out to find who did it and they want to help the usurped king of Mittleeuropa to get this throne back. Brett has fun with sardonic takes

on Germanic sounding place names like Korpzenschloss and Badd Vibesz. Goofiness abounds, murders are righted, and this romp of a read is perfect for a mindless candy floss brain break.

Sharon says

While the concept is amusing, and this story has its moments, the joke gets a little stale after a while. Brett creates a fun old-fashioned British Aristocrat mystery that is unfortunately too heavy on caricatures- the beautiful, but secretly clever heiress, her handsome and good-natured but ridiculously vacuous brother, the evil foreigners, the dependable but sadly lower class butler, etc. The mystery/adventure plot was slight and barely carried this farce into the three star realm for me.

Basically, it was amusing enough for a lark, but not worth continued reading in the series.

Ryan says

this fun little mystery is very entertaining and a good start to a series of shorter entertaining mystery novels. it has a bother and sister pair of sleuths, who are wealthy and live in London in the 1920's. the Right Honorable Devereux Lyminster, know as "Blotto" is not clever, but very witty. His sister, Lady Honoria Lyminster, (a.k.a Twinks) is the real brains behind the sleuthing, pointing out the clues and finguring out the case. in there first adventure, the have former royalty stating at there estate. an ex monarch of a foreign country in the mist of war and a power struggle. the servants find a body, belonging to a guard of the ex royal family, and the quickly deduce the true identity of the victim and his killers, the rest is pretty good as an adventure story versus a mystery, it was great to read and I enjoyed this story. the main characters are entertaining as well.

Gerry says

Simon Brett is a master at the mystery novel and in this, the first of a series, he adds comedy. for instance, one of the heros, Blotto - the Right Honourable Devereux Lyminster - says late on when he has nearly sorted out all the problems, 'And if you lot all played cricket, you wouldn't feel so foreign!'

An exiled King, Sigismund, and his daughter, Princess Ethelinde, are domiciled at Tawcester (pronounced Taster) Towers while back in their country of Mitteleuropa the usurper, Vlatislav, rules. Vlatislav's men kidnap Ethelinde and take her back to Mitteleuropa.

Thus begins a chase across Europe with Blotto and his sister Twinks, Lady Honoraria Lyminster, in disguise as a Mitteleuropean translator, in hot pursuit in their Lagonda. A series of hair-raising escapades take place before Blotto and Twinks triumph with Blotto, who overcomes a desperate love approach, tells his sister she is the 'lark's larynx' and sums the episode up with 'Tickey-tockey, well done on the whole rombooley.'

And with those words you have the feel for the whole novel, which keeps moving and is good fun.

Phair says

Billed as appealing to fans of Wodehouse but this first in a series falls far short of Wodehouse's wit and sparkle. To me the humor felt superficial and forced as well as rather trite. I grew tired of reading this about half-way through but as it was mercifully short I slogged to the end. Forgettable.

Zabby says

Dreadful. A very pale imitation of Rhys Bowen's "royal spyness" series...which themselves are what I consider "bubblegum" reading. Brett is so full of himself and writes in a condescending manner, imparting information he clearly thinks his readers would not know...thank goodness I got this from the local library as I would have been very cross if I had paid cold hard cash for it!
